

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - GUIDELINES FOR USHERS (GREETERS)

Greeters are those who speak with expressions of friendliness and welcome.

PREPARING THE CHURCH BEFORE THE SERVICE Arrive at the church at least 15 minutes before the service. Make sure you have sufficient service bulletins with the correct service time. Make sure that the outer street doors are unlocked and latched open

WELCOMING ALL WORSHIPPERS BEFORE THE SERVICE

Two ushers serve at each service. Ushers normally stay in the back of the church to welcome all people who enter through the street door. Each usher warmly welcomes (with a smile) each person as he/she enters the church, offers him/her a copy of the service bulletin (with all inserts for that service).

HELPING OUR WORSHIPPERS TO THEIR SEATS

Respond to worshippers' wishes to sit where they feel comfortable, while encouraging them gently to sit near the front, where they will be better able to see and hear.

BELL RINGING

In the absence of a designated bell ringer, one of the ushers will ring the bell when the organist gives the signal after the Prelude.

COUNTING THE WORSHIPPERS After Announcements, ushers stand near the back of the church and count the number of worshippers at the service (including the members of the altar party, choir, and all children).

OFFERTORY

Ushers at the back of the church will take from the table the communion vessels and the elements and wait in the aisle for the presiding priest to signal them to come forward to the altar. They should then bow to the altar and present the priest with the communion vessels and the attendance numbers.

When leaving the altar, ushers will pick up the offertory plates near the chancel steps and walk to the first pew. The collection will be taken by sending the offertory plate down each pew to the last pew at the back of the church.

The ushers when they reach the back of the church will turn and face the altar waiting for the Doxology. The Acolyte will bring the alms basin to the chancel steps and the ushers will proceed down the aisle and place the offertory plates in the alms basin; bow to the altar. In the absence of an acolyte, the ushers will close the gate to the altar and move the cushion in front of the gates. The ushers will then bow to the altar and sit in the front row until the choir is at the altar rail. The ushers will then move out in the aisle and bow to the altar. If there is no choir, then they will move to the aisle when the Lay Eucharistic Ministers begin to receive communion. The ushers stopping at one pew at a time will gently indicate (preferably with a smile) when the worshippers should rise and walk to the altar rail. Seek to keep worshippers moving towards the altar rail in a way that avoids a long line of people waiting in the aisle and also avoids large gaps between people at the altar rail. Ushers should be aware of those that need assistance walking up and then down the chancel steps to receive communion. One usher and a parishioner can provide assistance when needed. Communion can be received in the pews if a worshipper so desires. Ushers should initiate this invitation when appropriate to do so.

ALTAR RAIL AT THE END OF COMMUNION

The ushers will be the last to receive communion at the altar rail. One usher informs the priest about the worshippers in the pews waiting for communion. After receiving communion, the ushers will open the gate and return the cushion to its original position. Ushers then should return to the back of the church and be seated.

INVITING ALL TO COFFEE HOUR

After the service both ushers remain at the back of the church and invite all worshippers to join the coffee hour in the parish hall. Give special attention to worshippers whom you do not recognize, especially if they seem to be leaving by the front church door. Offer to accompany them to the Coffee Hour or introduce them to parishioners who will accompany them. Ask them to sign the guest book. Inform the priest of any persons whom you think might be new.

STRAIGHTENING UP THE CHURCH AFTER THE SERVICE

After you have invited and accompanied worshippers to Coffee Hour, gather service bulletins and inserts from the pews and restore the books to pew racks. Make sure that the outer street doors are relocked and latched closed.